

The Midwest Traveler



William Hogg is Kirksville's new Salvation Army major. Hogg and his wife, Kathy, have high aspirations for Kirksville's facilities.

Amy Deis/Index

By the Numbers: New Faces at Truman

= 10 people

127 transfer students

350 new faculty members

1,391 freshmen

Design by Kalen Ponche/Index
Source: Institutional Research office



Renée Wachter
Dean of Business and Accountancy



Timothy Walston
Professor of Biology



La'Chelle Moore
Freshman



Mark Maestas
General Manager of Ruby Tuesday

Newest Kirksville residents adjust to life in small town

Julie Williams
Staff Reporter

William Hogg has been zig-zagging across the Midwest for 17 years.

A major in the Salvation Army, Hogg's and his wife Kathy's path to Kirksville wound through Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin and Michigan. Even though relocating again in June marked move No. 6, Hogg wasn't fazed.

"Of course immediately we got the maps out, got on the Internet and found out where Kirksville was and what it is," Hogg said.

Two months later, Hogg said he likes living in Kirksville because the community is very friendly and giving.

"I love the slower pace," he said. "We came from the metropolitan Detroit area, so ... this is a nice change."

Hogg said his union with the Salvation Army began at birth because both his parents were officers, but he said he did not plan to follow in their footsteps.

"Back when I was in college, I was actually studying broadcasting, radio and TV," Hogg said. "... I had nothing set that I was going to do what I am doing [just] because my parents did it. In fact, that was one reason I didn't want to do it because I knew what the life would be like."

Instead, Hogg worked at a water treatment plant making chemical compounds for nine years. But God had other plans for him, he said. At 30, he attended the Salvation Army seminary with his wife. Two years later both were commissioned as Salvation Army officers and ordained as ministers.

Nearly two decades later Hogg said it's the satisfaction of helping people that makes him enjoy his job, even though it can be very demanding.

"I went down to the Gulf Coast a couple of times with Katrina," he said. "You go to bed tired, but it's one of those good treads because you know that you've made somebody happy that day, whether it's physically or spiritually."

On a more local level, Hogg has his sights set on possible improvements to the Salvation Army facilities in Kirksville, such as finding a new facility for the thrift store.

"Our pantry seems to be mushrooming, taking over program space in the building, so we'd like to do something with the pantry also," Hogg said. "Then of course there's the church. We'd like to grow a church."

The Accidental Dean

Becoming a dean can be a spontaneous one.

"I think if you had asked me ... back when I was in high school and going into college [if] I was going to be a college dean, I would have said no way," said Renée Wachter, dean of business and accountancy.

As a self-described "military brat," Wachter said she lived in Ohio, Maine, England and Germany before entering middle school. She said she lived in Kansas for many years after that and attended Kansas University before becoming the head of the information systems area at Ball State. She first served as an associate dean at the University of Indianapolis after an administrator offered to create a position for her. Then she moved to Montana State University in Bozeman, Mont.

"It was such an intriguing opportunity that I got all excited about it, and even though I hadn't really been out west before, I thought it was worth the adventure," Wachter said.

Wachter said she was a business major in college, but she chose to focus mainly on marketing.

"I'd always dabbled a lot with art in high school, ... and that was sort of my way to still keep in touch with the creative aspect," Wachter said.

Now, in her new office where Rosie the Riveter pops out in unexpected places, Wachter talks about being at Truman.

"I had to go to Chicago to do some recruiting, and I guess that's my favorite time when I get to tell candidates what fabulous students we [have] ... and what a terrific community it is," she said.

The Restaurateur

People skills are what really matter.

Mark Maestas likes to talk, knows it and also knows that's how he ended up as the general manager at Kirksville's Ruby Tuesday.

"I came in and applied as a cook," Maestas said. "The manager that hired me said she didn't want me as a cook."

Maestas said he always has been interested in cooking and even took classes for it, but his decision to work at a restaurant started out as a part-time job two years ago. After doing roofing and construction for six years, he decided to try the restaurant industry just during the slow seasons. Maestas said the manager started him as a server because of his personality, and he now is working as a general manager for the first time.

"Basically, my job is just to make sure that the restaurant is running good and every guest in here is happy," Maestas said. "Everything is cooked the way it should be, drinks are filled and everybody is having a good time."

Maestas is new not only to his job, but also to the Kirksville community. Maestas originally is from Los Angeles, although he said he also lived in the mountains where snow was common, so the cold weather doesn't bother him about the Midwest.

"I love the town, the town is great," Maestas said. "... I've gotten to know all my employees really well, and I work really well with them, so I'd like to stay."

The Freshman

Now that Truman Week is over, La'Chelle Moore needs a breather.

"It was really chaotic and long," Moore said. "... You get up early, and then you go to bed really late."

A freshman nursing major from Independence, Mo., Moore said she was drawn to Truman during her sophomore year of high school after receiving a mailing about the science program. By January of her senior year, Moore had decided to come to Kirksville.

"We stopped by, and then I came up here three separate times to look at the campus and to check out the rooms and everything," she said. "It just really fit what I enjoy, what I think of as being a home."

So far, Moore said living in a residence hall is working out OK because the girls in her hall are like one big family, and it was fun to decorate her room. The cafeteria food also is better than it was in high school, she said.

Moore said she has hopes of one day becoming an OBGYN. For now, she's just hoping she can get through college algebra.

"I'm afraid I'm not going to pass math," Moore said. "[The first day] was pretty much review, like I knew most of it ... The homework was a little different than I expected."

The Scientist

Timothy Walston likes to play with worms — the really tiny ones.

As a new professor at Truman this fall, Walston will teach Biology 107, focusing on topics such as evolution and how to think like a scientist. In his spare time, Walston researches genetics and developmental biology. That's where the worms come in.

"The research I do looks at how different genes contribute to cell movement," he said. "As a model for that, I study a little worm that's about a millimeter long called *C. Elegans*."

Walston uses his worms to learn about cell migration and how cancer cells move through the body because the processes are very similar.

His fascination with *C. Elegans* began in graduate school after he chose to do research with a professor who was studying the project. Walston said he hopes to get his research lab up and running so he can get new students involved in his work.

Other things that put a smile on Walston's face include fishing, living in Kirksville and most of all, his 9-week-old baby.

"The people here are just amazingly friendly," Walston said. "We have a brand new baby, and going around town people stop us everywhere we go, 'Oh can we see your baby?' ... I think it's going to be a great place to live."